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November 17, 2011

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioners:

Willoughby Hills, Ohio, is vastly different than Washington, D.C. We are a town of about 10,000 people, neither a rural community nor a city. We like to think we offer some of the best of both worlds to our residents and those who live nearby. However, I am concerned that, as you deliberate about the AT&T and T-Mobile merger, you might base your considerations on your experiences and not ours.

For example, we are the type of community that can benefit greatly from wireless broadband service, but you cannot assume that all communities like ours have access to the fast service that is necessary to support smartphones, laptops and the many applications including video that these tools can provide.

The proposed deal between AT&T and T-Mobile will be a large step forward technologically for communities like Willoughby Hills. It promises to result in a significantly larger footprint for 4G LTE, the next generation of wireless broadband that will bring even faster speeds. That means many rural areas that don't have cell service or wireless broadband will have the access people in large cities such as Washington, D.C. take for granted.

Wireless broadband will free many business owners and employees from the office, allowing them to carry on transactions from anywhere. The result will be more businesses joining our communities, leading to growth and new jobs. Given the vast number of smartphone apps, such as credit card transactions, this can transform a small county fair into a robust marketplace, for example. It can allow a farmer access to weather information and current market prices from anywhere on the farm, not just a home office.

Entrepreneurs will be able to startup new companies in any garage, as opposed to taking up residence in Silicon Valley. Distance learning classes will allow college students to take classes at their convenience. Bad weather will not stop business, as many workers can telecommute even when they cannot get to the office.

We need to achieve President Obama's goal of nationwide broadband access, and I believe that this merger will go a long way toward reaching that objective. I hope you will put yourself into the place of someone who lives in a small Ohio town, and see what a difference this infrastructure improvement would mean for millions of Americans. We need you to provide your support.

Sincerely,



Robert M. Weger
Mayor

RMW:gm